

Wisconsin Department of Natural
Resources Publication

Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area



A Users Guide to Public Wildlife
Recreation along the Lower Wolf
River



What to expect at the properties...
What's the difference?

Notes

State Wildlife Areas-These areas are acquired to preserve an important American heritage of wild lands and wild things for hunters, trappers, hikers, wildlife watchers and all people interested in the outdoors. The purchase of these lands prevents the privatization of important waterway access and game lands. Many of the wildlife areas have few facilities with development limited to small, gravel parking lots. Most do not have formal designated roads or trails, public restrooms, drinking water, or mowed picnic areas.

State Natural Areas-They are defined as tracts of land or water, which have biotic communities, unique natural features, or significant geological or archeological sites. Natural areas protect this natural diversity, provide sites for research and environmental education and serve as benchmarks for assessing and guiding use of other lands in the state. There tends to be little in terms of facility development, though there may be a designated trail or two on site. Some properties allow limited hunting.

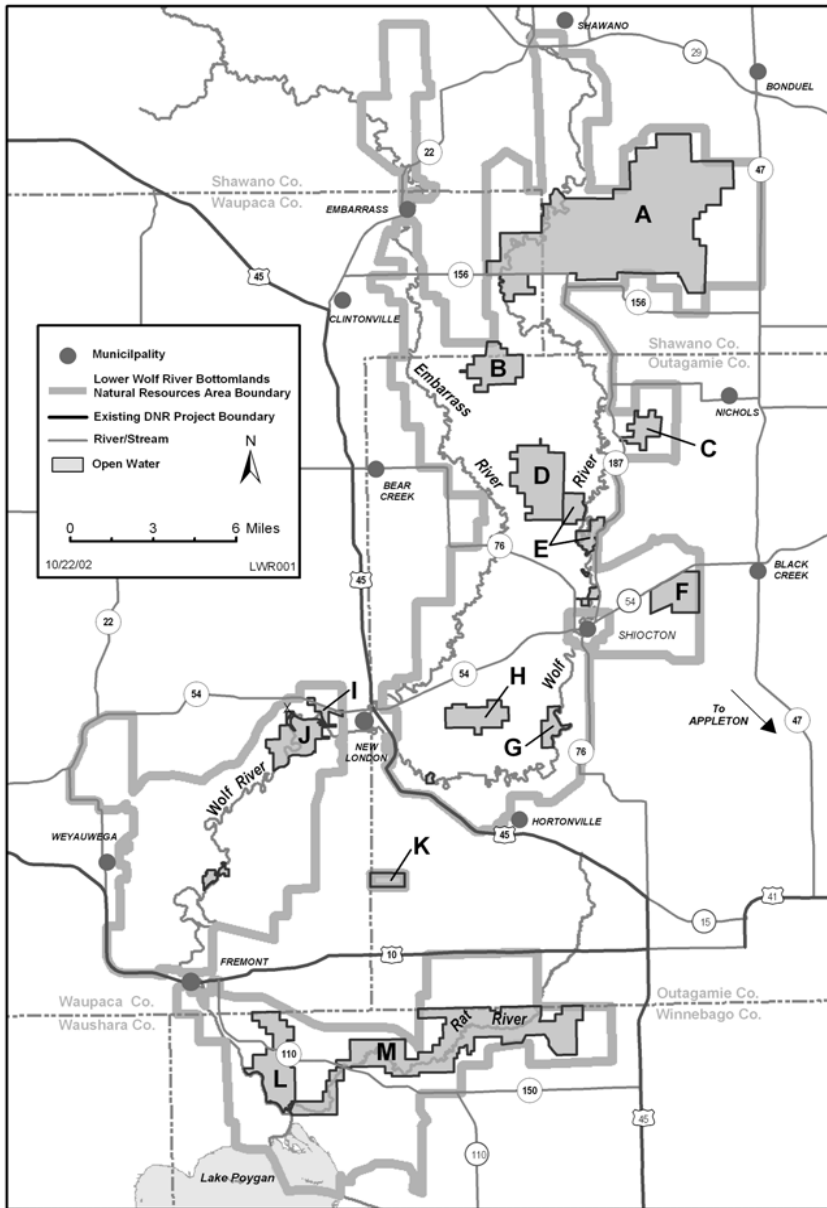
State Fishery Areas-These areas have been acquired to protect important waterways in Wisconsin from improper land use due to agriculture abuse or urban runoff. They preserve and manage headwaters and springs that often are the base for stream fisheries, and protect and improve spawning sites. Fishery areas usually consist of fee-title ownership as well as easements. In some cases, easement areas may allow for public fishing while other easements may include fishing, hunting, trapping, or some combination thereof. Boundary signs posted near parking lots and along borders explain uses.

Notes

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Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area



Wolf River Wildlife Area

Location and Size: The property is located in northwest Winnebago County in the town of Wolf River. Approximately 1,800 acres are owned, managed, or leased by the state.

Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is a wetland area where the Wolf and Rat Rivers meet. The Deltox Marsh segment was once a wire grass (sedge) marsh that was important to the local rug industry, but was converted to a canary grass marsh with scattered stands of willow. The Metzger Marsh segment consists of a lowland brush and grass complex (shrub carr) with cattail in the wetter sites. Stands of soft maple and brush occupy the narrow ridges along the river channel and oxbows.

Public Uses: Wolf River Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting*
- Trapping
- Birdwatching
- Canoeing
- Fishing
- Hiking

*This wildlife area contains a "Waterfowl closed area, trapping permitted".

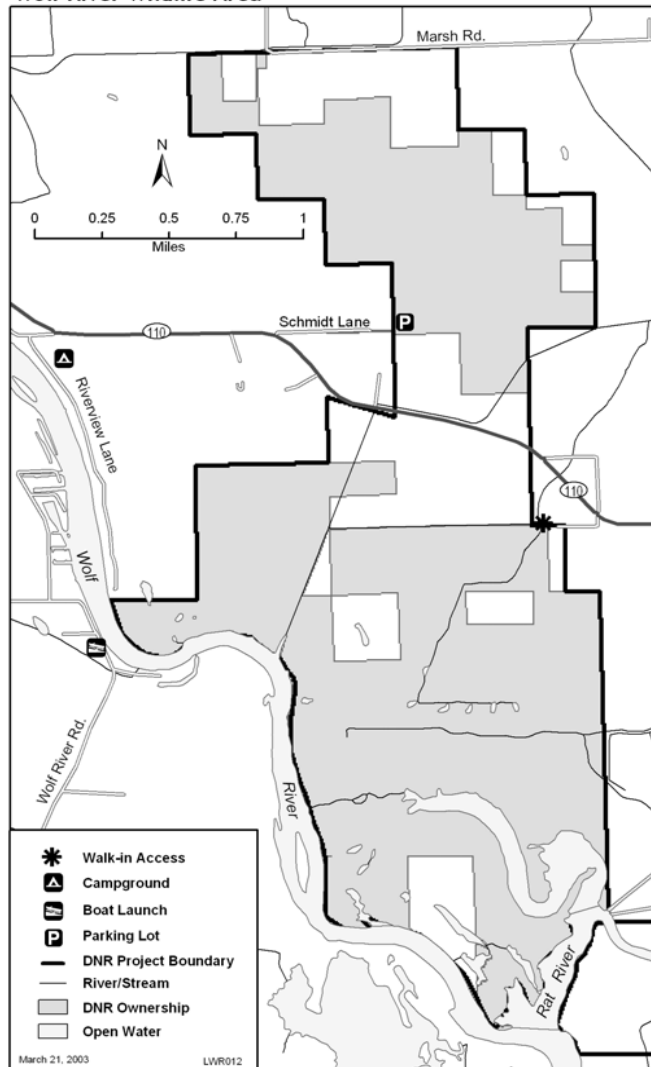
Wildlife: Ruffed grouse, woodcock, raccoons, muskrats, minks, white-tailed deer, rabbits, squirrels, waterfowl, Forster's and black terns, raptors, songbirds, shore and wading birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

Facilities: A Parking area is located at the end of Schmidt

Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area

The Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area encompasses 214,000 acres, and includes 14 existing Department projects. These Department projects, comprised mostly of wildlife and natural areas, total approximately 31,000 acres. The following list shows each property with a corresponding letter to help find each location on the map.

Wolf River Wildlife Area



Identifying Letter

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M

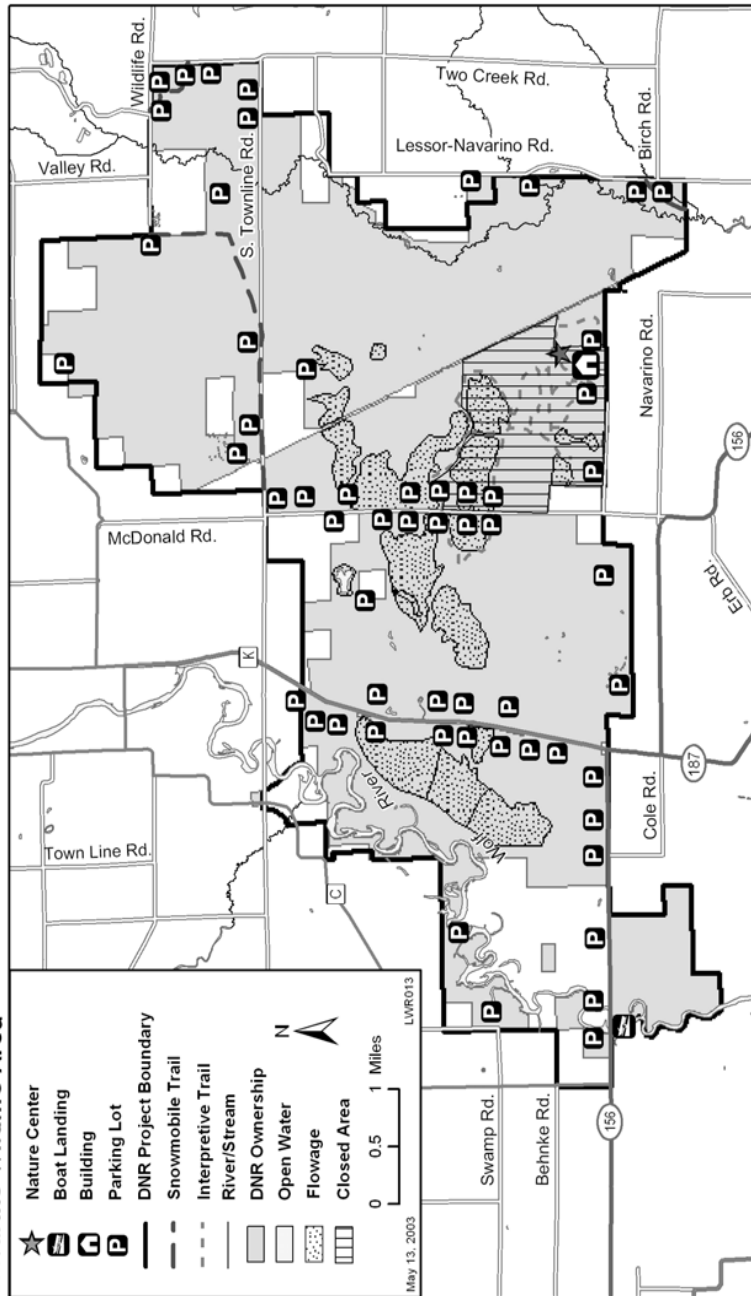
Property Name

Navarino Wildlife Area
Deer Creek Wildlife Area
Maine Wildlife Area
Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area-K&S Unit
Outagamie Wildlife Area
Mack Wildlife Area
Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area-LaSage Unit
Hortonville Bog State Natural Area
Wolf River Fishery Area
Mukwa Wildlife Area
Shaky Lake State Natural Area
Wolf River Wildlife Area
Rat River Wildlife Area

This Natural Resources Area was established in March of 2002, providing an opportunity to collectively protect and manage regionally significant natural communities. This project area provides necessary habitat for a variety of wildlife and aquatic species. Protection of these lands contributes to the Lower Wolf and Embarrass River corridor's overall biological health and diversity, and creates many recreational opportunities for public use.

The map on the preceding page is not intended for the purpose of navigation, or as an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access. Users should confirm ownership of land through other means in order to avoid trespassing.

The Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area properties offer a variety of recreational trail opportunities. Most of these trails are old logging roads or tops of dikes. Portions of these trails may be minimally maintained (i.e. dike mowing), but they are generally not maintained or inspected for public use and are not considered designated trails. The Navarino Wildlife Area interpretive trail is a designated nature trail that is maintained and signed. Other designated trails include snowmobile and cross country skiing as noted on specific properties. Information specific to each property is available from property managers, state publications, and posted in each property area. Enjoy your visit to the state-owned lands - please be safe, be careful, and act responsibly.



Shaky Lake State Natural Area

Location and Size: The natural area is located in southwest Outagamie County, in the Township of Hortonville just south of Hortonville. Approximately 220 acres are owned by the state. Due to muck soils access to portions of the property is limited. *Public access is possible through an easement on the northeast corner of the property.*

Topography and Vegetation: Shaky Lake is a marl-bottomed bog lake surrounded by wire-leaf sedge meadow, tamarack swamp, and cedar/black spruce forest. Glass-leafed pondweed, chara, and yellow pond lily are the dominant aquatic plant species. Other aquatic plant species include hard and soft stem bulrushes and arrowhead with scattered clumps of cattail. A quaking sedge mat, containing wire-leaved sedges and many plant species characteristic of bog and fen communities, dominate most of the lake basin. A narrow zone of alders and willows form the transition from open mat to the surrounding forest of hardwoods and tamarack.

Public Uses: Shaky Lake State Natural Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Hiking
- Nature Study
- Trapping
- Birdwatching

Wildlife: State-threatened wood turtle, green-backed heron, black duck, mallard duck, sharp-shinned hawk, broad-winged hawk, green frog, and bullfrog.

Facilities: There are no formal facilities available on this property.

Navarino Wildlife Area

Location and Size: Navarino is found in southern Shawano and northeast Waupaca Counties in the Townships of Navarino, Lessor, Hartland, and Matteson. The property is approximately 15,000 acres of state owned land.

Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is comprised of sandy uplands and ridges with marshy depressions. Open fields, swamp conifer, lowland scrub, bog, bottomland hardwoods, pine plantations, and aspen/oak forest make up the habitat types. The West Branch of the Shioc River and the Wolf River run through the property. This property is the most developed within the Lower Wolf River Bottomlands Natural Resources Area.

Public Uses: Navarino Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

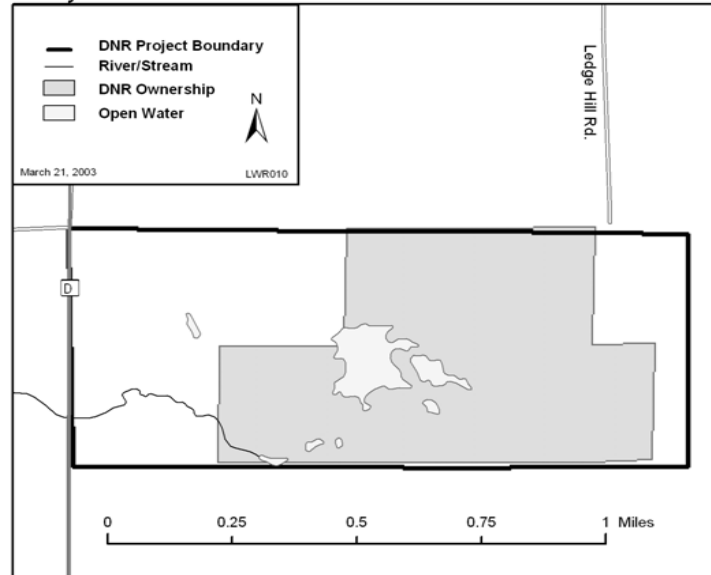
- Hunting*
- Birdwatching
- Hiking
- Interpretive Trail
- Snowmobiling
- Wildlife Viewing
- Canoeing
- Cross-country Skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Berry Picking

*This wildlife area has a "Waterfowl closed area; gun deer hunting permitted" refuge that is 1,000 acres in size.

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, wild turkeys, waterfowl, woodcock, cottontail rabbits, snowshoe hares, squirrels, Sandhill cranes, herons, black terns, bitterns, rails, grebes, coot, osprey, bald eagles, hawks, beaver, mink, muskrats, fishers, otters, raccoons, red fox, bear, coyotes, skunks, woodchuck, badgers, bobcats, songbirds, tundra swans, turtles, and frogs.

Facilities: The Navarino Nature Center is located on the property, and provides picnic areas, restrooms, parking lot, and cabin to accommodate program participants. There are hiking, snowshoe and groomed ski trails here. A canoe launch is available at the end of River Road and a boat launch is found at Hwy. 156 on the Wolf River. Ample parking opportunities are located throughout the property off of the following roads: McDonald, South Townline, Lessor-Navarino, Birch, and Hwy. 156, Hwy. K, Two Creek, Wildlife, and Swamp.

Shaky Lake State Natural Area



Mukwa Wildlife Area

Location and Size: Mukwa is located in southeastern Waupaca County, just west of New London. Approximately 1,300 acres are state owned.

Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is comprised for the most part of bottomland hardwoods, lowland brush, and old oxbows of the Wolf River. The Mukwa Bottomland Forest State Natural Area lies within the boundary of the property and consists of 160 acres. The natural area is located in the southwestern portion of the property, where the bottomland forest type is preserved. The topography is uneven, having been dissected by many old channels and fluctuating water levels.

Public Uses: Mukwa Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Hiking
- Wildlife Viewing
- Fishing

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, rabbits, squirrels, ruffed grouse, woodcock, muskrats, mink, otter, raccoons, waterfowl, turtles, eagles, hawks, and osprey.

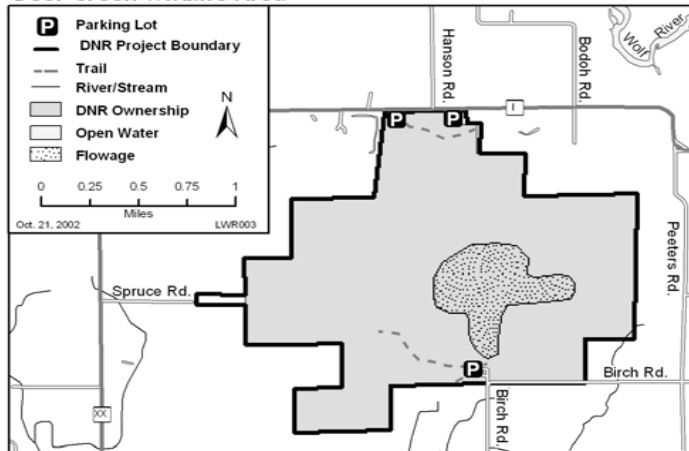
Facilities: Mukwa is used as a fishery nursery area in spring and a waterfowl rest area during the spring and fall migrations. Parking areas for the wildlife area are found on Hwy. X and Jennings Road. The Wolf River Sturgeon Trail project is located along Hwy. X between Mukwa and the Wolf River Fishery Area, providing pier fishing. This is a county project in the process of being developed which will provide public fish viewing and fishing.

Wolf River Fishery Area

The fishery area is located on Hwy. X, to the North of Mukwa Wildlife Area. Being in close proximity to each other, they are managed collectively. The property is approximately 200 acres, all being wetland, and was established as a fishery area in 1968. An abandoned railroad corridor bisects the property.

Access is entirely on the northern boundary, along Hwy. 54, being foot access only. The city prohibits parking along the highway, making no parking facilities available at this time. Fishing is a popular recreational activity in this state fishery area.

Deer Creek Wildlife Area



Deer Creek Wildlife Area

Location and Size: Found in northeast Waupaca and northwest Outagamie Counties in the Townships of Deer Creek and Matteson. The wildlife area is approximately 1,500 acres in size.

Topography and Vegetation: The property is comprised of rolling uplands of fine sand, which surrounds a central peat bog. Open fields, swamp conifer, lowland shrub, bog, pine plantations, and aspen/oak forests make up the habitat types of the land. The wildlife area drains to the Embarrass River, which is 2 miles to the west. The Wolf River lies to the east of the property.

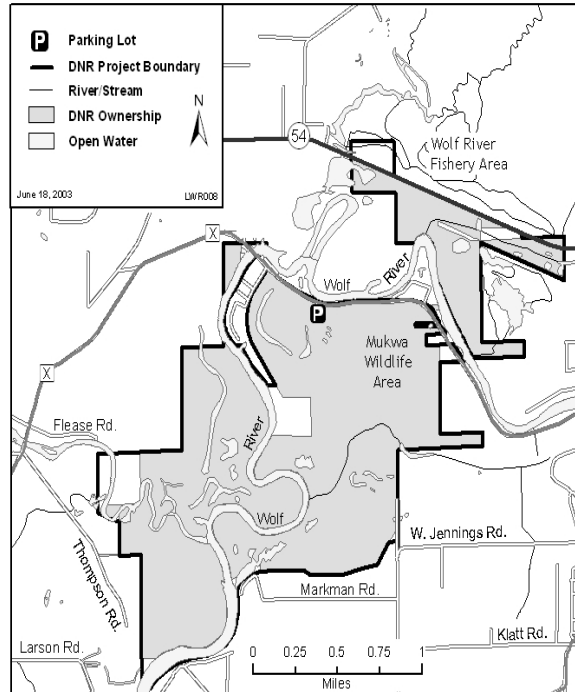
Public Uses: Deer Creek Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Trapping
- Hiking
- Snowmobiling
- Wildlife Viewing
- Birdwatching

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, rabbit, wild turkeys, waterfowl, woodcock, squirrels, Sandhill cranes, beaver, mink, fisher, raccoon, and songbirds.

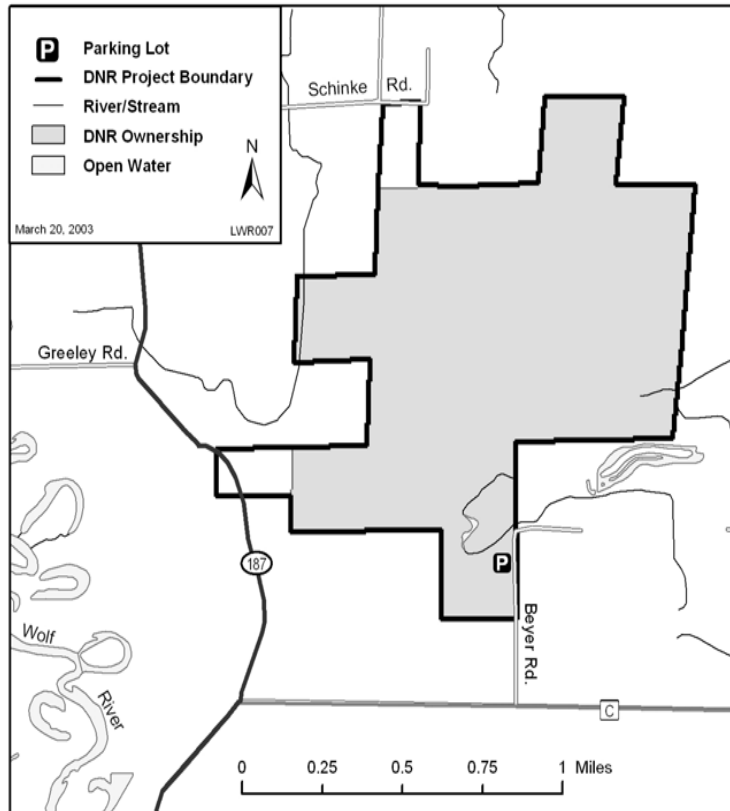
Facilities: There are three parking areas providing access to the property. Two are located on County Highway I near Hanson Road and the other is found on the corner of Birch Road. There is an easement on the end of Spruce Road providing access to the property.

Mukwa Wildlife Area and Wolf River Fishery Area



Rat River Wildlife Area

Maine Wildlife Area



Location and Size: The wildlife area is found in Winnebago County, two miles north of Winchester. The state manages and owns approximately 4,000 acres.

Topography and Vegetation: Historically, the area was comprised of sedge meadows and marshes. Today, much of the property is dominated by canary grass, and wetter areas support a dense population of cattails. The Rat River runs east to west through the long, narrow property, and eventually flows to the Wolf River. Some lowland forest types are found on the property, as well as a few upland fields.

Public Uses: Rat River Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Trapping
- Birdwatching
- Canoeing

Wildlife: Waterfowl, rails, ruffed grouse, pheasant, woodcock, raccoon, muskrat, mink, white-tailed deer, rabbit, squirrel, raptors, songbirds, shore and wading birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

Facilities: Parking areas can be found on North Loop Road, County Highway M, Hillcrest Road, and Shady Lane.

Maine Wildlife Area

Location and Size: The property is found in north-central Outagamie County in the Township of Maine, seven miles north of Shiocton, with the state owning approximately 750 acres.

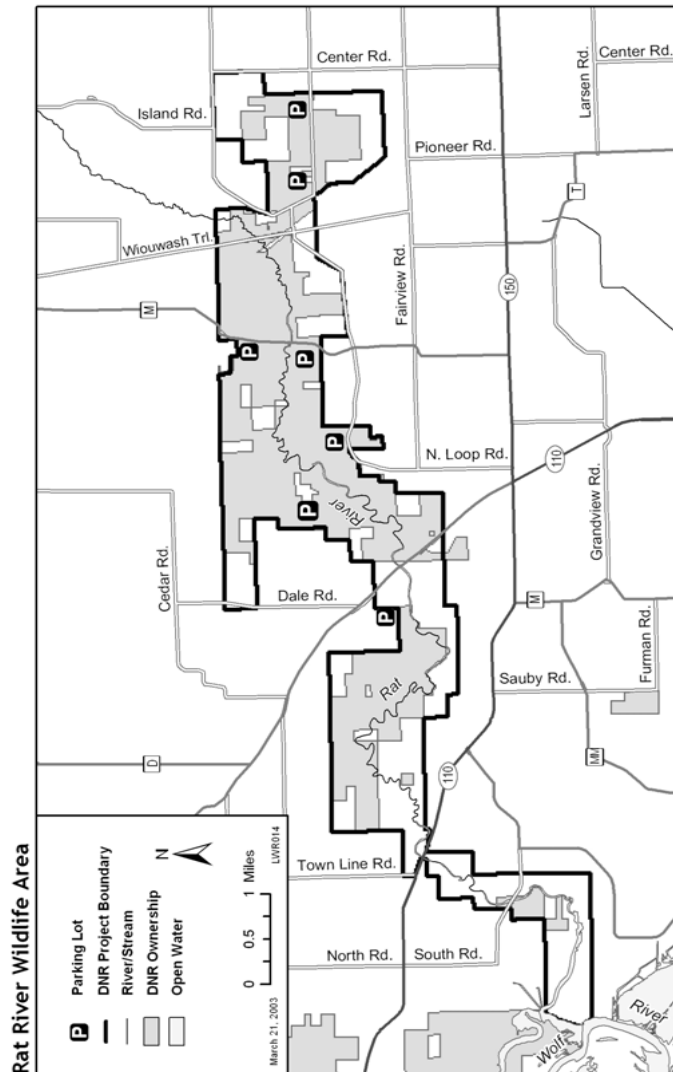
Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is comprised of bog marsh and aspen/oak ridges on fine sand. A large tamarack bog and spruce fringe is in the center of the property. The Wolf River flows one mile to the west.

Public Uses: Maine Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Trapping
- Hunting
- Birdwatching
- Hiking

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, wild turkeys, woodcock, wood ducks, rabbit, squirrel, beaver, mink, muskrat, raccoon, red fox, songbirds, frogs, and turtles.

Facilities: There is one parking area for the property. It is located on Beyer Road.



Hortonville Bog State Natural Area

Location and Size: The property is found in west central Outagamie County in the Township of Liberty, and is approximately 640 acres in size. *There is no public access to the property. To use the property, permission must be obtained from an adjacent landowner to gain access.* The Department of Natural Resources holds a wetland protection easement on the eastern portion of the property. This section of the property is not for public use.

Topography and Vegetation: Hortonville Bog is an open bog with a very deep sphagnum layer. Leatherleaf and Labrador Tea are common plant species. Although there is no open water, the bog is very spongy. Surrounding the bog is an advancing ring of tamarack and white cedar.

Public Uses*: Hortonville Bog State Natural Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

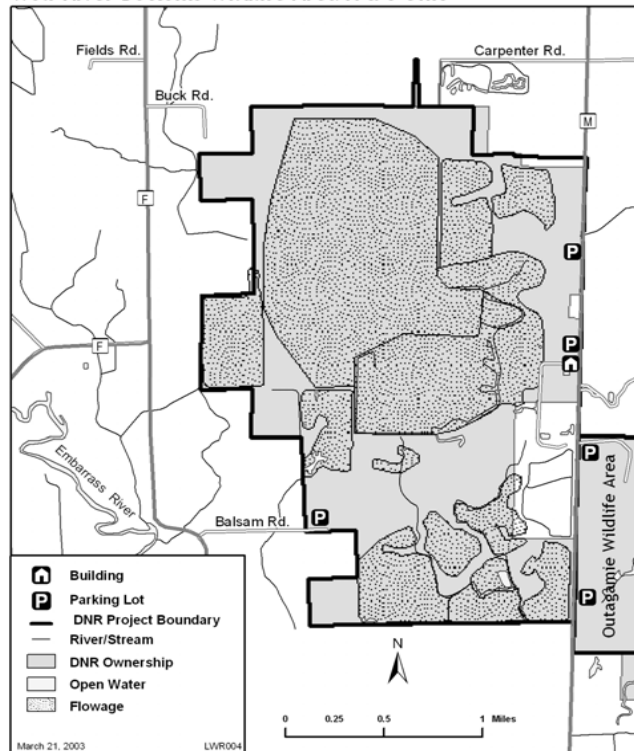
- Hunting
- Nature Study
- Research Study

**There is no public access to this property.*

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, winter wren, Canada warbler, Nashville warbler, white-throated sparrow, sharp-shinned hawk, northern water thrush, and Lincoln's sparrow.

Facilities: There are no facilities at this property.

Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area K & S Unit



Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area - K&S Unit

Location and Size: This unit is found in northwest Outagamie County in the Townships of Deer Creek and Maine, and is approximately 2,500 acres in size.

Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is made up of sandy, forested ridges, multiple impoundments, spruce plantation, swamp hardwood, wetland, and grassland habitat. Of the 2,500 acres of property 1,800 acres are impounded, 200 acres in upland timber, 100 acres in grassland and the remaining in wetland habitat. Two-thirds of the property is within the Wolf River fringe floodplain limiting improvements that can be made.

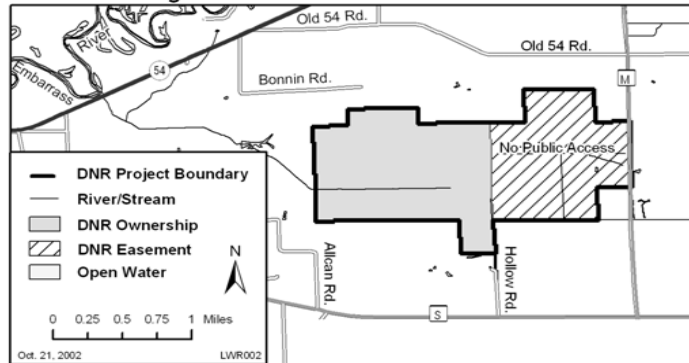
Public Uses: The Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area - K&S Unit provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Trapping
- Hiking
- Birdwatching

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, wild turkeys, waterfowl, rabbit, squirrel, Sandhill cranes, egrets, beaver, mink, muskrat, raccoon, otter, songbirds, bald eagles, osprey, frogs, and Blanding's turtles.

Facilities: There are three parking areas for the K&S Unit. Two are located on the West side of County Highway M and the other is at the end of Balsam Road. Additional walk-in access can be reached on the north end of the property using Carpenter Road.

Hortonville Bog State Natural Area



Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area - LaSage Unit

Location and Size: LaSage is located in west central Outagamie County in the Township of Ellington. The state owns and manages approximately 500 acres.

Topography and Vegetation: The wildlife area is comprised of aspen forest and bottomland hardwoods along the Wolf River floodplain. The Wolf River runs along the entire eastern boundary of the property.

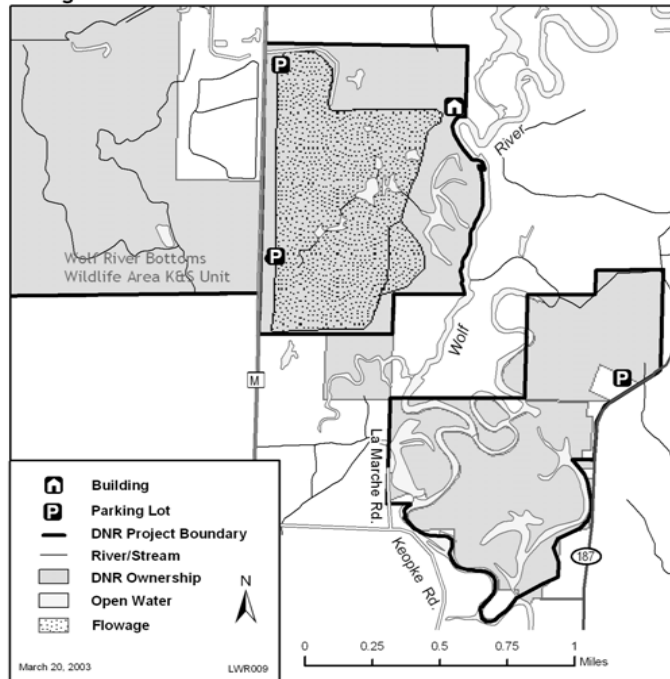
Public Uses: The Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area - LaSage Unit provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Trapping
- Canoeing
- Hiking
- Birdwatching
- Fishing

Wildlife: Waterfowl, rabbit, white-tailed deer, squirrels, Sandhill Cranes, beaver, mink, muskrat, otter, raccoon, red-shouldered hawks, songbirds, frogs, and turtles.

Facilities: Whitetails Unlimited-Fox Valley Chapter leases 20 acres with a house and outbuildings on the property. The public may use this area, with the exception of 3 acres surrounding the buildings, and the buildings themselves. There is a locked and gated road that leads to these buildings. There is parking available on County Highway S. Various canoe access points are found along the eastern boundary of the property, where the Wolf River runs.

Outagamie Wildlife Area



Outagamie Wildlife Area

Location and Size: The wildlife area is found in northwest Outagamie County in the Townships of Maine and Bovina, four miles north of Shiocton. The state owns approximately 1,000 acres.

Topography and Vegetation: The property is comprised of bottomland hardwood forest, impounded marsh, and aspen forest. The entire wildlife area is located in the Wolf River floodplain, limiting improvements. The Wolf River bisects the property allowing excellent access by boat.

Public Uses: Outagamie Wildlife Area provides the following recreational opportunities:

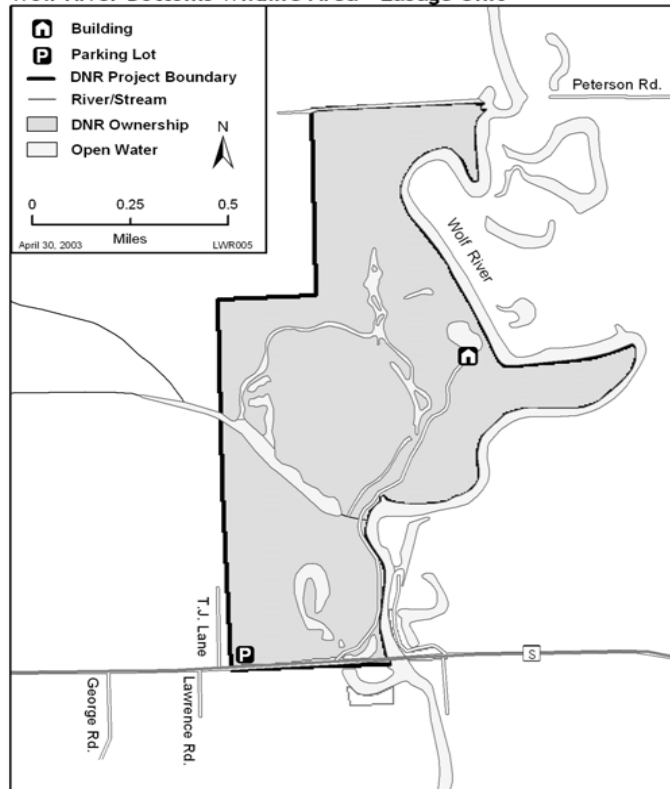
- Hunting*
- Hiking
- Birdwatching
- Canoeing

*This wildlife area contains a "Waterfowl closed area which still allows gun deer and special goose hunting".

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, waterfowl, rabbit, squirrels, Sandhill cranes, great blue herons, great egrets, osprey, beaver, mink, muskrat, raccoon, otter, songbirds, frogs, and turtles.

Facilities: There are three parking areas found on the property. Two are located on County Highway M and the other is on Highway 187. There is a pumphouse located on the property.

Wolf River Bottoms Wildlife Area - LaSage Unit



Mack Wildlife Area

Location and Size: The wildlife area is found in north-central Outagamie County in the Township of Bovina. The property is approximately 1,350 acres in size.

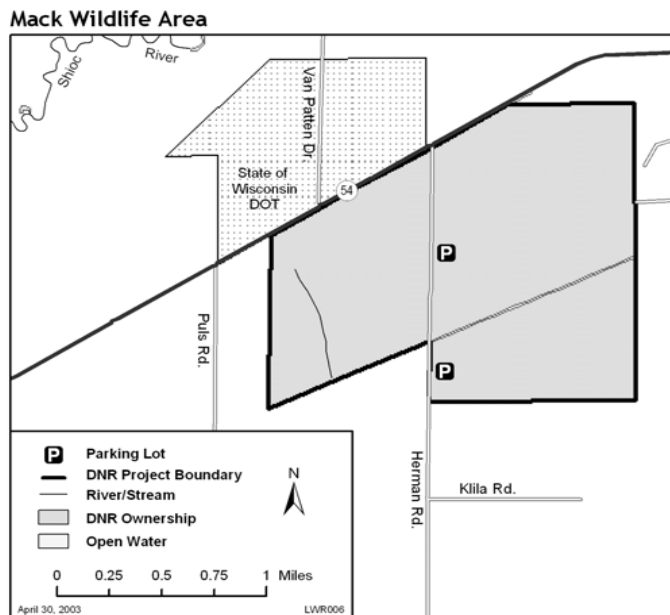
Topography and Vegetation: The area is flat since it was once a glacial lakebed. It is comprised of marsh, aspen, swamp hardwoods, old fields, and lowland brush. An inactive railroad bisects the southern section of the wildlife area and is slated for a rails to trails project.

Public Uses: Mack Wildlife Area provides the following recreation opportunities:

- Hunting
- Wildlife Viewing
- Hiking

Wildlife: White-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, rabbit, raccoon, songbirds, and shorebirds.

Facilities: There are two parking areas available for the wildlife area, both being on Herman Road.



DOT Mitigation Site

This is a 480 acre property located to the North and adjacent to Mack Wildlife Area with Highway 54 separating the two properties. The Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Natural Resources, and UW-Extension offices cooperatively manage it, with the DOT being the primary public contact agency. Waterfowl, black terns, great blue herons, egrets, and tundra swans use this area. A parking area on Van Patten Road serves as a public access point. A viewing platform and an educational kiosk can be found in the parking area.